

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: NOAA Sea Grant Community Climate Adaptation Initiative 2011

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-SG-2011-2002930

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.417, Sea Grant Support

Dates: Applications are due to Grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. (EST) November 22, 2011. The timeliness of applications received through Grants.gov will be determined by the date and time indicator included when applications are submitted. Hard copy applications will be date and time stamped when they are received. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without further consideration.

Funding Opportunity Description: NOAA Sea Grant expects to make available up to \$1,000,000 for a national competition to fund climate adaptation efforts for FY 2012-2013 as part of an overall plan to enhance climate adaptation in coastal communities. This Federal Funding Opportunity includes information on how to apply for this funding opportunity and criteria for climate adaptation projects requesting a total of up to \$100,000 in federal funds. Matching funds are required. Climate adaptation projects are expected to be conducted in partnership with local community governments, state and Federal agencies. Projects selected in this competition will be awarded and funded in FY 2012-2013 and must be completed by January 31, 2014.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The NOAA National Sea Grant College Program was established by Congress to promote responsible use and conservation of the Nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources. Sea Grant carries out NOAA's mission of stewardship of our country's oceans and atmospheres through a broadly based network of universities.

This climate adaptation initiative is designed to support action to prepare for the current and predicted impacts of climate variability and change on America's coastal communities.

Applications to this competition must propose projects that identify and address the vulnerabilities a coastal community may face in adapting to climate change. These projects are expected to produce demonstrable outcomes by the end of the project period. Projects must be carried out in active partnership with local (county or municipal) leadership, and should include cooperation with relevant state, NOAA, and other Federal agencies, or other organizations, as appropriate.

This Federal funding opportunity supports NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan (<http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/ngsp/>) mission goals of:

- 1) Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Goal - Mitigation And Adaptation Choices Supported By Sustained, Reliable, And Timely Climate Services - Coastal resource managers incorporate a greater understanding of the risks of sea level rise, changes in Great Lakes hydrology and water levels, and other climate impacts to reduce the vulnerability of coastal communities and ecosystem resources
- 2) Resilient Coastal Communities and Economies Goal - Resilient coastal communities that can adapt to the impacts of hazards and climate change - An increase in the percentage of U.S. coastal states and territories demonstrating annual improvements in resilience to coastal and climate hazards.

Projects submitted under this funding opportunity must contribute to achieving the following National Sea Grant performance measure:

Number of coastal communities that have adopted/implemented economically and environmentally sustainable climate change adaptation practices and policies.

For the purposes of this call, a "coastal community" refers to a local jurisdiction (such as county or municipal) with authority to act on the adaptation activities proposed. It does not refer to non-jurisdictional communities such as communities of interest or practice.

B. Program Priorities

It is a programmatic priority for this competition to fund technical assistance projects for coastal community climate adaptation where:

- a) the outcomes of the project improve the capacity of a specific coastal community (i.e., coastal county or coastal city as defined in section A identified by name in the proposal to adapt to climate change;
 - b) the involved community is cohesive enough to have a formal planning or governing body with legal authority to act on the adaptation activities proposed;
 - c) the involved community contributes non-federal matching funds (which may be in-kind support);
 - d) individuals representing the community's leadership are active participants in appropriate components of the project;
 - e) community leadership commits in writing to consider incorporating the results of the project into master plans, ordinances, or other community planning instruments, or implementing the results of the project in other concrete ways specified in the proposal;
 - f) the project may serve as a model for other communities to carry out climate adaptation.
- It is not a programmatic priority to fund projects intended to influence the rate or severity of climate change (climate mitigation), unless they also serve to help a community adapt to predicted impacts of climate change. It is not a programmatic priority to fund research on how to adapt to climate impacts, except as a necessary component of a project that identifies and/or implements climate adaptation actions. It is not a programmatic priority to fund projects not tied to a specific community, or tied to non-jurisdictional communities such as communities of interest or practice.

C. Program Authority

33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Sea Grant expects to have available up to \$1,000,000 for climate adaptation efforts for FY 2012-2013, pending Congressional appropriation. Each individual proposal may request a total of up to \$100,000 in federal funding for a project period ending January 31, 2014.

B. Project/Award Period

The anticipated start date is February 1, 2012, with projects to be completed January 31, 2014. Projects are expected to be completed within the timeline of the proposal, and are not eligible for automatic no-cost extension under expanded authorities.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Applications selected for funding will be funded through grants or cooperative agreements. We will use cooperative agreements if the proposed project includes substantial

NOAA involvement as described in the award. Examples of substantial NOAA involvement may include non-compensated collaboration in research or approval of key stages in the project before subsequent steps are undertaken.

These grants or cooperative agreements will not be eligible for automatic no-cost extension under expanded authorities.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply to this funding opportunity: Sea Grant College Programs, Sea Grant Institutional Programs, the Guam Sea Grant Project, and the Lake Champlain Sea Grant Project. A given proposal may involve two or more Sea Grant programs working in collaboration, but may not exceed \$100,000 in federal funds per Sea Grant program.

Other interested parties are encouraged to work with the Sea Grant programs in their region to explore opportunities for partnering. Contact information for all eligible state Sea Grant programs can be found at http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/nsi/2011/climate_pocs.html or may also be obtained by contacting the Agency Contact listed in Section VII.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Non-federal matching funds equal to at least 50 percent of the federal funding request must be provided. In-kind contributions can count towards this matching requirement.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Proposals must be submitted electronically, via Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>), addressing opportunity number NOAA-OAR-SG-2011-2002930. The application package is available on Grants.gov. Eligible applicants who can prove they do not have access to the internet should contact the Agency Contact listed in Section VII.

A Title Page template, Sea Grant 90-2 form, Sea Grant 90-4 form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362) and NEPA questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538) are available at <http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html> or may be requested from the Agency Contact listed in section VII.

B. Content and Form of Application

Applications must adhere to the provisions under Format Requirements and Content Requirements below. Applications received that deviate from content and format requirements, or those received after the deadline, will not be reviewed.

An individual Sea Grant Program can submit proposals through Grants.gov for this competition. Submissions involving two or more Sea Grant Programs should be assembled as separate proposals with a designated program responsible for the proposals and other partnering programs listed as subcontractors.

Format Requirements: All application materials should be composed in Portable Document Format (PDF) or a common word processing format, and when printed out should meet all format requirements. All pages must be single- or double-spaced, printed or typed in at least 12-point font, and printable on metric A4 (210 mm x 297 mm) or 8.5-inch x 11-inch paper, with 1-inch margins.

Content Requirements: Brevity will assist reviewers and program staff in dealing effectively with proposals. Therefore, the Project Description may not exceed 12 pages. Tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are included in the 12-page limit.

The signed title page, project summary, references, budgets and budget notes, current and pending support sections, letters of support, and vitae do not count towards the 12-page limit. All information needed for review of the proposal should be included in the main text; no appendices are permitted.

For each proposal the following information must be included:

- a. **Signed title page (one-page maximum):** The title page should clearly identify the program area being addressed by starting the project title with: "Sea Grant Climate Adaptation 2011", followed by a colon, the community name, state, and a brief descriptive title of the proposal, followed by a hyphen and letters "PI" and the last name of the Principle Investigator. For example, "Sea Grant Climate Adaptation 2011: Blackport, XX - Climate Adaptation in a Small Coastal Village - PI Doe". The title page must include the name, affiliation, and address of the investigators with e-mail and telephone numbers, the budgets requested and match offered for each project year and a total budget figure, and the date of submission. An optional Title Page template is available at <http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html>
- b. **Project Summary (two-page maximum):** The project summary must not exceed two pages and should succinctly describe what is being proposed and the projects essential elements. The project summary must include: (a) Title: Use the exact title as it appears in the rest of the application; (b) Investigators: List the names and affiliations of each investigator who will significantly contribute to the project, starting with the Principal Investigator(s); (c) Funding request for each year of the project, including the amounts and sources of matching funds; (d) Project Period: Start and completion dates. Proposals must request a start date

February 1, 2011; and (e) a one-page maximum Project Abstract: This abstract must include the rationale for the project, the scientific or technical objectives and/or hypotheses to be tested, a brief summary of work and accomplishments to be completed to be used for public dissemination. A Sea Grant Form 90-2 may be found at <http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html> and may be used for this purpose.

c. Project description (12-page maximum):

(1) Introduction/background/justification: This section should include a clear statement of the climate adaptation work to be undertaken for each proposed project. In addition, the project's goals, objectives, activities should be succinctly stated. A description of the project's community partner and the Sea Grant program's existing capacity to meet that community's needs should be included. Subjects that the investigator(s) must include in this section are: (i) current state of knowledge of problem or issue and justification for proposed work; (ii) contributions that the project will make to the community adaptation; (iii) contributions the project will make toward addressing the problems identified in the appropriate Sea Grant Strategic Plan or Regional Research and Information Plan, and (iv) how replicable the project may be for other communities.

(2) General Work Plan and Milestones: Include as appropriate: Provide a specific, measurable, time-bound work plan for these activities. This should include objectives to be achieved, questions to be addressed, how the objectives relate to the program priorities listed in Section I.B, evaluation criteria, and role of all project personnel. Describe specific goals and objectives, activities, and deliverables including publications, presentations, and public education. If the project calls for the use of outside consultants who have not yet been selected, the selection criteria must be included here. A national community climate adaptation conference will be planned for 2012; proposals should include attendance at this conference in the work plans and project budgets.

This section must also describe how the community extension, outreach or other parts of the overall project will be integrated to effectively lead to the desired result. It must also discuss how the success of the project (i.e., objectives, timelines, milestones) will be measured and reported.

This section must include a target value for the performance measure listed in section I.A. The Sea Grant program will be expected to incorporate this performance measure and target into its strategic plan.

This section must also include at least one milestone (a significant activity to be performed or objective to be achieved) per year.

(3) Outcome: Describe how the results of the project will benefit stakeholders (e.g., local coastal communities, public and private sectors). Specifically, describe the project outcomes or benefits that will contribute to improving climate adaptation in the partner coastal community, and if the benefits can be extended to other coastal communities. Identify the planned outcomes in objective, quantifiable terms. The outcome should be a description of the desired end state to be achieved (for example, the desired changes adopted by the partner

community), not just a description of the activities to be performed. Describe how the project outcomes will enhance community adaptation. If appropriate, describe how the outcomes will affect an identified regional, state, or national climate adaptation priority. Describe how the outcomes of the project will be measured and reported. (4) Outreach Plan: Describe specific outreach goals, activities, and deliverables including publications, presentations, and public education. Provide a specific, measureable, time-bound work plan for these activities. (4) Coordination with other program elements: Describe any coordination with other agency programs or ongoing research or extension efforts. Describe any other proposals or outside activities that are essential to the success of this proposal. This includes description of the coordination with various elements within and between participating Sea Grant programs and with other partners outside Sea Grant.

d. References and literature citations: Must be included as appropriate. This section does not count towards the 12-page maximum.

e. Budget and matching funds justification: Applications must reflect the total budget necessary to accomplish the project. There must be a separate budget for each year of the project as well as a cumulative budget for the entire project. Applicants are to use the Sea Grant Budget Form 90-4 (OMB Control No. 0648-0362, available at <http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html>). Subcontracts must have a separate budget page. The appropriateness of all matching funds (including in-kind contributions) will be determined on the basis of guidance provided in applicable federal cost principles, and applicants will be bound by the percentage of matching funds in the grant award. Applicants must provide justification for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. Pay special attention to any travel or supply budgets and provide details. A national climate adaptation conference is planned for 2012; budgets should include funds for attending this conference. This section does not count towards the 12-page maximum.

f. Current and pending support: Applicants must provide information on all current and pending federal support for ongoing projects and proposals, including subsequent funding in the case of continuing grants. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the principal investigator and other senior personnel must be included. The relationship between the proposed project and these other projects must be described, and the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the projects must be stated. This section does not count towards the 12-page maximum.

g. Letter(s) of support: Applicants must provide a letter of commitment from the partner community; letters of support from other stakeholders may be included. This section does not count towards the 12-page maximum.

h. Vitae (2 pages maximum per investigator). This section does not count towards the 12-page maximum.

i. Standard application forms: The following standard application forms are available through grants.gov: CD511, SF424, SF424A, SF424B. They are mandatory for a proposal

application. This section does not count towards the 12-page maximum.

j. NOAA NEPA Questionnaire: As part of this application process, certain questions from "The Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Federal Financial Assistance Applicants" (OMB Control No. 0648-0538) must be answered. This NEPA Questionnaire form is available at <http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html>. All applicants need to fill in sections A, B, C, D, E, F and G. If a question from one of these sections is not applicable to your project, you should answer "not applicable" or "NA" rather than leaving blank. This does not count against the 12-page limit. Failure to complete all of the indicated questions will result in the application being considered incomplete, and the application will be rejected without further review.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due to Grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. (EST) November 22, 2011. The timeliness of applications received through Grants.gov will be determined by the date and time indicator included when applications are submitted. Hard copy applications will be date and time stamped when they are received. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without further consideration.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this Program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

E. Funding Restrictions

No special restrictions apply.

F. Other Submission Requirements

No other submission requirements.

G. Address for Submitting Proposals

Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov. If an eligible applicant can prove he/she does not have internet access, contact the Agency Contact listed in section VII for submission instructions.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposed project to the National Sea Grant program goals (maximum 20 points): This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, State, or local activities. For

this competition, this ascertains:

- (a) the degree of impact of the proposed work will further adaptation to climate change, contribute to environmental sustainability, and advance the state of the industry, science, or state-of-the-art methods for climate adaptation; and
- (b) the degree to which the proposal includes a concrete, unambiguous outcome, and has a good chance of achieving that outcome (including meeting stated performance measure targets).

2. Technical/scientific merit (maximum 20 points): This assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For this competition, this ascertains:

- (a) the quality of the work plan;
- (b) if the proposal includes all components (research, outreach, extension, etc) necessary to achieve the desired outcome. Is there an effective plan for integrating all components;
- (c) if the proposal includes a way to objectively determine its success at achieving its outcomes.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (maximum 15 points): This ascertains whether the applicant and others on the team possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, authority within the partner community, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. This includes their record of achievement with previous funding. If the proposal includes the use of outside consultants that have not yet been identified, this criterion includes how clearly the selection factors for the outside consultants are set out, and the expected qualifications of the consultants based on those selection factors.

4. Project costs (maximum 20 points): The budget is evaluated to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame (5 points). For this competition, this criterion includes the relative amount of match that the partner community pledges to the project as a demonstration of the community's commitment to the project, taking into account the size of the community (15 points).

5. Outreach and education (maximum 25 points): Assesses whether this project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For this competition this ascertains:

- 1) if the proposal includes a clear and objective work plan for outreach strategy and specific activities to maximize dissemination of results to stakeholders (10 points);
- 2) the level of active participation by the partner community in the project (10 points); and
- 3) the ability of the project to serve as a model for other communities (5 points).

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application.

All complete and timely proposals will be subjected to technical peer review by the National Sea Grant Office based on the evaluation criteria listed above. Evaluation will be by a

review panel of government, academic, NGO and/or private sector scientists and managers. Scores will be provided by each member of the panel based on the evaluation criteria contained in this request for proposals. The Program Coordinator will review the ranking of the proposals and the review panel comments and make recommendations to the Selecting Official. Awards will be made in rank order unless a proposal is justified to be selected out of rank based upon one or more of the selection factors described in the next section.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall recommend to the NOAA Grants Officer to award in rank order unless a proposal is justified to be selected out of rank based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding
2. Balance and distribution of funds
 - a. Geographically
 - b. By type of institutions
 - c. By type of partners
 - d. By research areas
 - e. By project types
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies
4. Program priorities and policy factors as given in section 1B
5. Applicant's prior award performance
6. Partnerships and/or Participation of targeted groups
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

Consequently, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest-scored proposals. Investigators may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to approval of the award. Subsequent administrative processing will be in accordance with current NOAA grants procedures. A summary statement of the technical review by the peer panel will be provided to each applicant of a proposal.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, awards are expected to be made by February 1, 2012. Projects must be completed by January 31, 2014.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notification will be issued to the Authorizing Official and the Principle Investigator of the project either electronically via Grants Online or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected for recommendation.

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the Central Contractor Registration and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, 170 (2010), http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl, http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS -

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre- Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7696). A copy of the notice may be obtained at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/search.html> .

2. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY - In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

3. NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) - NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov> , including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/nepa>. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites,

species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports to the State Sea Grant Program for reporting requirements. These reports are to be submitted electronically, unless the recipient does not have proven Internet access, in which case hard copy submissions may be accepted; however, no facsimiles will be accepted. After consultation between the Principal Investigator(s) and the State Sea Grant Program staff, reports are to be submitted electronically by State Sea Grant Program staff via Grants.gov.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000.

VII. Agency Contacts

Requests for information regarding the NOAA Sea Grant Community Climate Adaptation Initiative 2011 should be directed to Mr. Michael Liffmann 301-734-1074 or to Dr. Joshua Brown 301-734-1271; via e-mail at oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov; Mailing Address: NOAA Sea Grant; 1315 East-West Highway, SSMC3, R/SG; Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Questions about this funding opportunity may be sent oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov. Questions of general interest will be responded to, time permitting, on a question-and-answer website about this competition:

http://seagrant.noaa.gov/funding/ansi/faq/cccai_2011.html

VIII. Other Information

Projects are expected to be completed within the timeline of the proposal, and are not eligible for automatic extension under no-cost authorities.